# Prep work important before painting

Painting a home's interior can give it a completely new look and feel. A fresh coat of paint can make a room feel more vibrant and up-to-date, creating a whole new attitude within the room without breaking the bank.

Whether creating an accent wall or painting each wall within a room, painting is a relatively easy and inexpensive home improvement project. But that doesn't mean painting does not require a little prep work before the project can begin.

* Address any holes or bumps on the wall. Holes or cracks in the wall will need to be patched with spackle, which then must dry before the wall can be given a new coat of paint. In addition, sand down any bumps until the walls are smooth and free of any unsightly abnormalities.

* Wash the walls. Walls can get dirty, and that dirt may or may not be masked by paint. Before adding a new coat of paint, wash the walls and inspect them for dust. Dust can collect on molding, especially in rooms that get little natural air. When dust has collected on the molding and around doorways and trim, use a damp cloth to wipe it away before adding any new paint.

* Apply primer. Primer can serve many functions, not the least of which is its role as a bonding agent between the wall and the top coat of paint. Primer can also help conceal dark colors, prevent stains and increase the life expectancy of the paint job you are about to undertake.

* Prepare your paint. Preparing the paint is a simple task, but one novice painters may not be aware of. When opening a new can of paint, stir the paint before using it. In addition, even if you don't plan to use a roller when painting, do not paint straight from the can, which can be heavier to hold than a small bowl, and a light bowl is less likely to be spilled than a potentially heavy can of paint. In addition, once paint has been removed from the can, replace the lid so dust and other impurities do not settle in the can.

* Purchase painter's tape. Painter's tape can be especially valuable to novice painters. Painter's tape makes it easier to paint smooth and clean paint lines, giving a room a more professional looking coat of paint without the cost of hiring a professional painter.

Painting can be an inexpensive and fun way to upgrade a home's interior. But even though painting does not require the technical know-how of more large-scale home improvement projects, it still requires some prep work and attention to detail to ensure the job is done right.

■ *MetroCreative Connection*